

# UTILITIES & BILLS



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## AN INFORMATIONAL GUIDE FOR TENANTS

The general rule is that the tenant (as the bill payer) is responsible for contacting, arranging and paying for all utilities when living in a rental property.

However, we actually help set some these up for you at the beginning of the tenancy, as much as we can (see page 2).

Below is a general guide on the common bills you will pay while renting.

### Utilities

Utilities is the term used when discussing the energy providers and services for the household. These includes gas, electricity and water. You will be responsible for paying the utility bills, unless specifically stated in your tenancy agreement.

These costs can vary significantly depending on your usage and the property's energy efficiency. As the bill payer, you can change providers if you wish.

### Council Tax

Council Tax is a local tax imposed by your local council to fund public services such as schools, rubbish collection, and local infrastructure. The amount you pay depends on your property's location, size, and the number of occupants. Students and some low-income individuals may be eligible for exemptions or reductions.

### Internet and TV

If you want access to the internet and television services in your rented property, you'll need to pay for these separately. There are various providers and packages to choose from, so shop around for the best deals that suit your needs.

### Insurance

While your landlord's insurance may cover the building itself, it's essential to consider contents insurance to protect your personal belongings in case of theft, damage, or other unexpected events. Tenant's liability insurance can protect against accidental damage to the Landlord's fixtures and fittings. This is optional but highly recommended for your peace of mind.

As a company, we are unable to advise on insurance products and you should seek further information from accredited companies.

### TV Licence

If you watch or record live television or use the BBC iPlayer, you are legally required to have a TV Licence. This applies whether you watch on a TV, computer, tablet, or any other device. Failing to have a TV licence when required can result in fines.

## Utilities - How we help

At the tenancy start, we write to (where applicable) **gas, electric, water and council tax**.

We provide them with your names and the meter readings taken just before your tenancy start (which can be found in your inventory, which will be in your move-in pack when the tenancy starts).

These companies should then contact you, usually by mail, and you can then decide how you wish to pay (monthly, quarterly etc.). We recommend you wait until you receive a letter with your names on it, instead of 'occupier' or similar. This way, you know that the meter readings should be accurate and you're not paying for previous tenants' usage. Larger utility companies can take up to a few weeks to send a letter through, just for you to be aware.

Double check and make sure the dates and meter readings are correct. It should show your tenancy start date and the meter readings, which can be found within your inventory.

If any utilities are on a key meter, then this works slightly differently. You would just need to take the key to an appropriate payment point (shop or similar, or potentially online) and charge the key with funds and credit the meter that way.

We confirm with outgoing tenants who the energy suppliers are at their checkout, so we will not know until this happens. You are allowed to change to other energy providers during your tenancy if you wish, but I would highly recommend you let the original suppliers set up accounts first. We've been made aware of various issues in the past and the larger companies can get very confused if it is done at the same time! If you do change providers during your tenancy, simply let us know by email so we can update our records.

Tenants are then expected to close down their accounts and pay their final bills at the end of a tenancy. Again, meter readings will be provided in the checkout report, so it keeps things nice and simple.

We cannot get involved with other utilities such as **internet, phone lines, tv license etc**. So it is up to you, to decide who to go with. They should be able to open an account using the property address and most properties have already had phone lines and internet to the property, so the various providers should be able to find them pretty easily.

Please make sure you provide the correct start date, so any new services do not disrupt the current tenants.

